Nativity Scene Narratives

(Part I)

"And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus."—Luke 1:30-31 (ESV)

Valley Grace Brethren Church of Armagh, PA
December 4th, AD 2022

The LORD'S Day

The Fourth Day of December, *in the Year of our Lord* 2022

Welcome to the worship services of Valley Grace Brethren Church!

Sunday School—9:30 AM.

We continue our exhaustive examination of the **Doctrine of Divine Election**—a key issue which will inevitably shape one's basic perspectives concerning God, Man, and Salvation.

Morning Worship—10:30 AM.

Call to Worship:* *"Go, Tell it on the Mountain"* (#127: chorus only).

Invocation.*

Hymn: *"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"* (#125).

Prayer for Tithes & Offerings.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38.

Prayer, Praises, & Testimony.

Hymn: *"There's a Song in the Air"* (#121).

Announcemnts.

Hymn: *"Angels from the Realms of Glory"* (#124).

Dismissal of Youth for Children's Church.

Greeting One Another.

Message: *"Nativity Scene Narratives* (Part I)."

Closing Hymn:* *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"* (#128).

Benediction.*

The Congregation will please arise, if able.

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Also check out our YouTube Channel (search "Terry Reese")!

Week of Nov. 27 - Dec. 3

Sunday School—8; Morning Worship—15
Midweek Prayer & Bible Study—No Service;
Church Offering—$356.00

Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study—6:30 PM.

We resume our studies on Belshazzar's Feast of Folly (**Dan. 5**).

Christmas Party

Our **CEF** sponsored Christmas Party for children ages Preschool to 5th Grade will be **THIS Saturday, Dec. 10th**, from **10:00-11:30 AM**.

Today's Verses for Reflection:

And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."—Matthew 1:19-21 (NASB)

"Infinite, and an infant. Eternal, and yet born of a woman. Almighty, and yet hanging on a woman's breast. Supporting a universe, and yet needing to be carried in a mother's arms. King of angels, and yet the reputed son of Joseph. Heir of all things, and yet the carpenter's despised son." —Charles Spurgeon

The First Christmas: Why did God's Son come to planet Earth?

by DR. JOHN C. WHITCOMB

Is there anything special about planet Earth that God the Father would send His Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, through Whom the universe was created (John 1:3), all the way down from the third heaven to this tiny speck in the ocean of space? First of all, how far did He have to come to get here? The psalmist asks, *"Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!"* (Ps. 113:5-6). If God must humble Himself to behold the universe, how much more must He humble Himself to find the Milky Way (one of billions of galaxies), and the solar system of planets orbiting our sun (one of a hundred billion stars in our galaxy) and then planet Earth (one of the smaller planets)? The universe is infinite in its magnitude as far as human beings are concerned, for God has assured us that *"if heaven above can be measured…I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD"* (Jer. 31:37). Which means, of course, that we can never measure it! No, *"the host of heaven cannot be numbered"* (Jer. 33:22), for *"the stars of the heaven"* are as numerous as *"the sand which is upon the seashore"* (Gen. 22:17). Then, why did God's Son come to our tiny planet Earth? The answer is biblically clear: only the Earth is inhabitable and has inhabitants. The prophet Isaiah informs us that God *"formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, he created it not in vain [like all the other planets in the universe], he formed it to be inhabited"* (Isa. 45:18). But – amazing to contemplate – not only plants and animals live here, but also human beings who possess the image and likeness of God! That is why the Creator of everything (Col. 1:16) by-passed all the other galaxies, all the other stars in our galaxy and the bigger planets in our solar system (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune) and came here to become a permanent member of the human race inside the body of a Jewish woman. That is the permanent wonder of Christmas. Our personal existence began here (for Adam and Eve by creation, and for the rest of us by procreation). But God's Son existed as the Second Person of the Godhead forever before He added a human nature (body, soul and spirit) to His divine nature: *"The Word* [God's Son] *was made flesh* [human]*, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14). Yes, that is the message of Christmas: the beloved Son of God rejoiced with the Father for all eternity *"before the world was"* (John 17:5), and then 2,000 years ago came all the way down from *"the third heaven"* (2 Cor. 12:2) to this exclusively inhabited planet to pay in full the penalty for sin which we could never pay. What love, what mercy and what grace! As one has so appropriately observed: *"We had a debt we could not pay. He paid a debt He did not owe"* (author unknown). *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). Merry Christmas!